

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

MENSTRUAL EQUITY IN THE PEACE CORPS ACT

HON. GRACE MENG

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2020

Ms. MENG. Madam Speaker, I rise today to announce the introduction of the Menstrual Equity in the Peace Corps Act.

On March 1st, we recognized the 59th Anniversary of the Peace Corps. Established by Executive Order 10924, issued by President John F. Kennedy, and authorized by Congress, Peace Corps has been an enduring symbol of peace and friendship between the U.S. and our global community. Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) sacrifice over two years of their time, working side by side with local leaders to combat some of the most pressing challenges of our generation. This is a transformational time for many of our volunteers—and I am particularly proud of the many constituents from my congressional district of New York's Sixth who have served abroad in Peace Corps.

At the same time, however, I have heard from many PCVs around the world who struggle to access and afford menstrual hygiene products. These current PCVs and Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCV) note how menstrual products are not readily available, or these items are far more expensive than they would be in the U.S. So many of these volunteers are also placed in very remote locations. In fact, for one RPCV who served in an indigenous island, she had to travel by a combination of cargo ship rides (10+ hours), plane ride(s), small boat ride, several hour hikes, and hitchhiking to get to and from the capital, where the Peace Corps Country Office is located. Ultimately, for some PCVs, not only is there a financial hurdle, but a volunteer may have to travel extremely far distances to access menstrual hygiene products.

There is also vast inconsistency in the provision of these products for the volunteers. Some Peace Corps Medical Officers provide these products for free to their respective PCVs, while others are left to purchase the products out of pocket. Other country offices provide an additional stipend to volunteers to purchase these products, while other volunteers wait to receive these items in their care packages from loved ones back home. I also heard a U.S. Peace Corps staff equate these products to mere razors and shaving cream—ultimately disregarding the medical necessity for these products.

To address this inequity, I am introducing a bill—the Menstrual Equity in the Peace Corps Act—to require the enactment of a comprehensive policy that makes available free menstrual hygiene products to PCVs, or increase stipends to allow for these expenses. Menstrual hygiene products are not luxury or toiletry items. These are medical necessities; a health right and human right. And this is a simple matter of equality.

Madam Speaker, today, PCVs serve in over 60 countries around the world. Nearly 65 percent of PCVs are women, and more than 90 percent of these volunteers are under the age of 50. PCVs are already making both financial and personal sacrifices in order to represent the United States abroad, and they are a critical part of U.S. development power. Peace Corps notes that 'nothing is more important than the health, safety, and security of every single volunteer.'

Indeed, for the health, safety, and security of these volunteers, I urge my colleagues to support the Menstrual Equity in the Peace Corps Act. I thank my colleagues who have already joined me in introducing this critical legislation, and I urge the House of Representatives to join me in passing this critical legislation.

HONORING KELSEY KRUSE AND DANE KRUSE AS IOWANS OF THE WEEK

HON. CYNTHIA AXNE

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2020

Mrs. AXNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing two outstanding young Iowans, Dane and Kelsey Kruse from Silver City, Iowa. These two, brother and sister, are young farmers in Mills County continuing the family tradition on the farm. They were recently featured in a national advertising campaign that focused on the challenges young farmers face.

Dane and Kelsey, or the "Kruse Kids," are sixth-generation hog farmers that sell to Niman Ranch. Both in their early 20s, Dane and Kelsey are young faces in a profession where the average age is nearly 58. As Kelsey said, "It's becoming very difficult for younger people to get themselves started" in farming.

I know many of my colleagues agree on how important it is to support young farmers like Kelsey and Dane. Nothing is more critical to the future of Iowa's rural economy than young people returning home to their community and carrying on the family tradition. Too often we see young Iowans moving away from their communities to seek opportunity elsewhere.

Not only are the Kruse Kids helping their community by returning home after college, they are serving as incredible ambassadors for rural Iowa as the focus of national attention. Earlier this year, Dane and Kelsey joined other young farmers and participated in the Rose Parade on New Year's Day to kick off Chipotle's "Cultivate the Future of Farming" initiative.

The Kruse family hogs are raised naturally with plenty of room, fed a vegetarian diet, and are antibiotic free. As consumers want to know more about where their food comes from, the Kruse Kids, along with their father

Jeff, are proud to show off their farm and how they raise their Iowa hogs.

I'm proud to honor Dane and Kelsey as our Iowans of the Week. As Dane shared to millions in the commercial, farming isn't easy. But why does he do it? "You can say it is in my blood, you can say I'm crazy, I don't know, I just like farming."

I hope you all will join me in recognizing Dane and Kelsey Kruse, along with all other young farmers across the country, and continue to work to ensure more kids have the resources they need to continue the family tradition.

DENNIS CULNAN, SR.

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2020

Mr. NORCROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and commend the Mount Laurel, New Jersey resident Dennis Culnan, Sr. for his 75th Birthday.

On Saturday February 22, 2020, family and friends will gather to celebrate and honor Mr. Dennis Culnan, Sr. on his 75th Birthday. Mr. Dennis Culnan, Sr. was born on February 14, 1945 and grew up in Northeast Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Throughout his childhood he often encountered challenging and adverse circumstances as his family struggled to make ends meet. However, life changed after he first saw the love of his life, Joan Plocharska. At the age of 14, Mr. Dennis Culnan, Sr. met Joan while attending Father Judge High School, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Joan, as Dennis describes, was sweet, shy and as delicate as a snowflake. Dennis and Joan dated on and off for several years and eventually married in 1966.

Following his graduation in 1964 Mr. Dennis Culnan, Sr. honorably enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. He quickly earned the rank of Lance corporal and proudly served his country before being medically discharged.

Thereafter he returned home and established himself as an award-winning investigative reporter, political writer and columnist for the Courier-Post of Cherry Hill, New Jersey, where he worked for nearly four decades. Furthermore, with his extensive experience in public relations and governmental affairs consulting, in 1993, Dennis founded the public affairs firm Phoenix Strategies, specializing in government relations, communications, lobbying and grassroots education.

During his time with the firm, Mr. Dennis Culnan, Sr. served in many capacities, including as the director of marketing and communications strategy for Siemens Transportation while AMTRAK was introducing high-speed rail from Washington, D.C. to Boston, Massachusetts. Recently he led New Jersey's consulting and marketing messaging for Spectra Energy's successful 1.2-billion-dollar energy

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

infrastructure project and provided the marketing, media relations and communication needs for the South Jersey Port Corporation.

Mr. Culnan's family are of the utmost importance to him. He is often known to refer to his wife Joan, his sister Tina and his mother Dorothy, as his "Holy Trinity". Although his beloved wife Joan, passed on in 2011, after 45 years of marriage her memory will always live on through their love and their family. Together, Dennis and Joan have two sons, Dennis Culnan, Jr. and Derek Culnan, two daughters-in-law Silvia and Genevieve, and two grandchildren Dillon and Kaitlin.

Madam Speaker, I ask you to join me in honoring the life and career of Mr. Dennis Culnan, Sr. of Mount Laurel, New Jersey, on his 75th Birthday.

**CORONAVIRUS PREPAREDNESS
AND RESPONSE SUPPLEMENTAL
APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2020**

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2020

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise to speak in strong support of the H.R. 6074, the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2020, which will provide \$8.3 billion in funding to combat the novel coronavirus.

The legislation includes \$950 million for state and local health agencies to conduct vital public health activities, including surveillance, laboratory testing, infection control, contact tracing, and mitigation.

My thoughts and prayers are with the 9 families who lost a loved one to the coronavirus, and the many others who have contracted the disease.

We owe a special debt to First Responders who will be the lifeline for many who will need medical care to overcome this coronavirus designated as COVID-19.

Earlier this year, when I saw news reports in early January on the novel Coronavirus's rapid spread and the numbers of infected expanding so quickly, I knew this was not something to be taken lightly and that time was not on our side to mount an effective defense.

On February 10, 2020, I held the first press conference on the issue of the novel coronavirus at Houston Intercontinental Airport.

I was joined by public health officials, local unions, and advocates to raise awareness regarding the virus and the implications it might have for travel to the United States from China and to combat early signs of discrimination targeting Asian businesses in the United States.

On February 24, 2020, I held a second press conference on the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization declaration of a "public health emergency from the outbreak of the Coronavirus."

At that time, I formally requested the President of the United States by letter to immediately suspend any health-related cuts that impact efforts to contain and treat the coronavirus, including the \$3.3 billion in cuts to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and

the discretionary budget cuts for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of nearly 19 percent at \$678 million, severely threatening the CDC's ability to respond to this and other epidemics in the future.

Additionally, I requested the President to suspend cuts in both the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

On February 26, 2020, I sent a letter to the Chair and Ranking Member of the Committee on Homeland Security seeking a meeting with Acting Secretary of Homeland Security Chad Wolf to gain insight into the Preparedness of the Agency to address a possible pandemic.

On February 28, 2020, I spoke on the Floor of the House and Announced plans to form a Congressional Coronavirus Task Force.

I thank Congressmen BRIAN FITZPATRICK, Dr. RAUL RUIZ, and Congresswoman LAUREN UNDERWOOD for joining me as co-chairs of the Congressional Coronavirus Task Force.

Today, March 4, 2020, the House of Representatives is giving a full-throated response to coronavirus by introducing an \$8.3 billion of new funding to help federal, state, and local public health departments meet the challenge of preparing communities for COVID-19.

Among its provisions, the emergency supplemental introduced by Chairwoman LOWEY includes:

More than \$3 billion for research and development of vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics;

\$2.2 billion in public health funding for prevention, preparedness, and response, \$950 million of which is to support state & local health agencies;

Nearly \$1 billion for procurement of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies, to support healthcare preparedness and Community Health Centers, and to improve medical surge capacity;

\$435 million to support health systems overseas to prevent, prepare, and respond to the coronavirus;

\$300 million to respond to humanitarian needs;

\$61 million to facilitate the development and review of medical countermeasures, devices, therapies, and vaccines, and to help mitigate potential supply chain interruptions; and

Allows for an estimated \$7 billion in low-interest loans to affected small businesses.

The emergency supplemental also contains other strong provisions to ensure a full response and keep Americans safe. The bill:

Requires that funds are only used to fight the coronavirus and other infectious diseases;

Allows seniors to access telemedicine services for coronavirus treatment;

Helps ensure that vaccines and treatments for coronavirus are affordable; and

Ensures that state and local governments are reimbursed for costs incurred while assisting the federal response.

Additionally, the bill includes a requirement to reimburse \$136 million to important health accounts, including mental health and substance abuse treatment and prevention and heating and cooling assistance for low-income families, that was transferred by the Trump administration to support its response.

On Tuesday, March 3, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported 60 cases of COVID-19 from 12 states. Twenty-two of these cases are travel-related; 11 are believed to be person-to-person spread; and for the remaining 27 the source of exposure is

still under investigation. Noteworthy developments in recent days include:

Florida announced its first and second presumptive positive cases of COVID-19, one in a person with recent travel history (to Italy), the other with no currently known travel or contact history.

Georgia announced its first and second confirmed cases of COVID-19, one is a person with recent travel history (to Italy), the other in a close contact of the first patient.

New Hampshire also reported its first presumptive positive case of COVID-19 in a person with recent travel history (to Italy).

New York state announced its first case of COVID-19 in a person with recent travel history (to Iran).

Rhode Island announced its first presumptive positive case of COVID-19 in a person with recent travel history (to Italy).

Washington state announced more cases of COVID-19 associated with an outbreak in a long-term care facility. Washington has announced it now has 14 cases of COVID-19, including 6 COVID-19 deaths.

The 12 states that have reported cases include: Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Washington, and Wisconsin.

Today, the World Health Organization reports a 3.4-percent mortality rate for COVID-19.

The challenge with this new coronavirus is that it is highly contagious, and of those infected, 15-20-percent contract pneumonia.

And 5 percent of these cases may develop Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS), which is a rapidly progressive disease occurring in critically ill patients.

The main complication in ARDS is that fluid leaks into the lungs making breathing difficult or impossible.

This virus is a potentially serious public health threat, but this does not mean that we should have a public health panic.

There are knowledgeable and trained virologists, public health experts, and physicians who are who need the funding provided by this bill.

I also organized a bi-partisan task force on the COVID-19 to help Congressional Members during this crisis to better serve their constituents.

I ask that my colleagues join me in voting in support of H.R. 6074.

**HONORING CLAYTON COMMUNITY
LIBRARY'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY**

HON. MARK DESAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2020

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Clayton Community Library as it marks its 25th anniversary.

The effort to establish a library in the City of Clayton began in March of 1989 with the Clayton Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW). Having decided that their community needed a library, the AAUW partnered with other community organizations to create the Clayton Community Library Foundation. The foundation raised money and worked with the City of Clayton